SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Sir, why can't you club it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: These are the procedures.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Why can't you club it, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member is not present.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: The Minister is here. You club it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no; the Minister may be here, but the question has to be first raised and, then, answered. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, it is a very important question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am afraid, it can't be done. ...*(Interruptions)*... I am afraid, it can't be done.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, I want to raise it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Look you are taking away precious minutes. It doesn't help matters. ...*(Interruptions)*... Question 506, please.

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*505. [The questioner (SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN) was absent. For answer *vide* page 22]

*506. [The questioner (SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI) was absent. For answer *vide* page 22]

*507. The questioner (SHRI DHARAMPAL SABHARWAL) was absent. For answer *vide* page 22]

Construction of Pulichintala Project in Andhra Pradesh

*508. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that to provide irrigation facilities to some of the districts of Andhra Pradesh, the State Government is constructing the Pulichintala Project across Krishna river;

(b) if so, whether any slippages have been noticed while constructing the project;

(c) if so, the details of cost and time overruns, the reasons for slippages and the measures taken to arrest them along with their impact;

(d) the districts of Andhra Pradesh which would be covered by the project; and

(e) by when the project would be completed and total area of land that would be irrigated?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (e) As per information provided by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, the Pulichintala Project across Krishna River being implemented by Government of Andhra Pradesh was scheduled for completion by September 2007. However, due to Court's intervention and for want of environmental and forest clearances, the project has been

rescheduled for completion by December 2008. There is no cost overrun. Pulichintala project is only a balancing reservoir to stabilize an ayacut of 10.42 lakh acre under krishna Delta System covering Krishna, West Godavari, Guntur and Prakasam districts of the State.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, the very purpose of asking this question is to avoid delays in the execution of projects. I think, my Congress friends are very keenly looking at me as if I am going to criticise them. I am not going to criticise anybody; keep assured. ...*(Interruptions)*... Keep assured. ...*(Interruptions)*...

Sir, this is a project which has been conceived in 1988. The foundation-stone was laid by the them Chief Minister, Shri N.T. Rama Rao. It is true that the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been executing the projects, and this is one project which has been awarded under EPC. Sir, this EPC concept is very widely in vogue in Andhra Pradesh; the experience has confirmed that it has got a very high potentiality of fraudulent transactions. This particular project has been awarded to a particular company which is involved in the construction of concrete dam and spillway of 33 gates. Now, the contractor is claiming that he can construct only 24 gates; the Government of Andhra Pradesh has objected to that. Because of that, the project which should have been completed by 2007 September has been delayed; it is yet to be completed. And for the contractor, if it is reduced to 24 gates, there will be a saving of Rs. 55 crores, which he does not want to give to the Government. As a result of this controversy, it has been referred to a Dispute Resolving Committee. There is an opinion of the Dispute Resolving Committee and the Central Water Commission. My question is whether the Government of India will take the initiative to resolve this issue so that this project is completed at the earliest.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Sir, this is not project that has been approved by my Ministry. It has a chequered course. He is right. In 1996, it was examined by the Central Water Commission and a conditional clearance was given at that point of time. Thereafter, there was a dispute with the Planning Commission. After the Technical Advisory Committee of the Central Water Commission gives clearance, investent clearance has to be granted by the Planning Commission. That has not been done and the State Government has gone ahead with this project. Water is a State subject. We can't run after the States if they construct canals or dams, and if they want to creat irrigation potential. In this situation, what the Andhra Pradesh Government says is at variance with your goodself. There is an internal dispute with the contractor that he has not paid some money to the Government. That is not corroborated by what the Andhra Pradesh Government is telling us. The Andhra Pradesh Government says that there was a slippage and there was delay of 15 months because people had gone to the court. But they say that there is no cost overrun and they are going ahead with this project.

As far as the Central Water Commission is concerned, it had given a conditional clearance at that point of time. Now, if that Government approaches us, we shall examine it and help them with the Planning Commission. But they are not approaching us. They are going ahead and they say that they will complete it by the next year.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, I think, either I am naive or the Minister is naive.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: I am not ...*(Interruptions)*... I have the records with me. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. K. KESIAVA RAO: Sir, the subject is confusing. ...*(Interruptions)*...

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: I am giving you the facts, my dear friend. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: I have near made any remarks against the State Government ...*(Interruptions)*... I am never to ensure the early completion of the project. ...*(Interruptions)*... If. you want to create a controversy, then get prepared. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please let the supplementary question be put. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: I you want to create a controversy, then get preapard. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put you supplementary question. ...*(Interruptions)*... Don't get into a debate. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, I am not making any comments against the State Government ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put you supplementary question.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, the Finance Minister is there. If there is any time overrun in any project, naturally, it involves cost overrun. Should I believe the answer given by the Minister that it should have been completed by September, 2007? It is yet to be completed and they say that it is going to be completed by December, 2008. We are in April, 2008. Till now the issue has not been resovled. How can I believe that there will not be any cost overrun? Just because the State Government has given some reply, you are repeating it there.

So, my second supplementary is this. Many projects in Andhra Pradesh have been given under the concept of EPC. Our experience shows that this EPC. concept has got all the potentiality for fraudulently changing the designs and inflating the estimates. Otherwise, how has the contractor got the sagacity to change the design which has been approved by the State Government and which has been tendered as per the approved design? That itself if a controversy. So, the second part of my supplementary is this.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: This is the third supplementary. Anyway, you go ahead.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, these projects, either it is Thottapalli. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could you put your second supplementary question? You put only question.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: In the case of many projects, the estimates have been increased overnight by Rs. 300 crores or Rs. 400 crores. I would like to know whether the Government of India has got any mechanism to monitor the completion of the projects as per the costs or the capital outlay that has been approved.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN- SOZ: Sir, in fact, the question should not have been raised because this is not our project at all. We have neither approved it nor have we funded it. Actually, I should show respect to the hon, Member. I will answer all parts of his question. He should not have raised this question with me. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Then, you should not have accepted it. ...*(Interruptions)*... It should not have been accepted for discussion. ...*(Interruptions)*...

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Kindly listen to me. I will answer all the elements of your question. But the point is that we have not approved this project. We are not funding it. We have only one instrument, that is AIBP. We are not funding it under that scheme. We have not yet even cleared it wholly. We have given a conditional approval.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please listen to the answer. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: What is the role of the Government of India in such things?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not interrupt.

MR. C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: What is the role of the Government of India in such things?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not interrupt.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: What is the role of the Government of India? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. Member resume his place? ...*(Interruptions)*... Please resume your place. This is not the forum for a discussion. ...*(Interruptions)*... He is answering a question.

MR. C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: The Government of India does not have any role in it.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: There are situations where we have no role. Water is a State subject. If the State Government does not seek my approval, they can go ahead. I am not a policeman. Kindly listen to me. This has not been approved by the Ministry. The Central Water Commission has not given any clearance and has not given any money. Therefore, we are not answerable to you directly. But I am saying that I have information which I have to share with the House. That is the information from the State Government. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, he is answerable to the private companies. ...*(Interruptions)*... The entire Government is answerable to private companies. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down ...*(Interruptions)*... Will you please resume your place? ...*(Interruptions)*... I am afraid you are abusing your privilege. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please do not do it. ...*(Interruptions)*... Just a minute. One minute. The Members of the Council of States are expected to know the constitutional structure of India. If a matter is not within the domain of the Central Government, then the question should be raised in the domain to which it belongs. That is all that the hon. Minister is saying. Take the answer. If you find the answer to be faulty, there are ways of pointing out the fault. If the answer is false, there are ways to point out that it is false. But don't get into a discussion here because the supplementary is meant to be in response to the answer given, and do not bring in everything from everywhere into a supplementary question simply because you have got a chance to put a supplementary question. Mr. Minister, please complete the answer.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, I am fully aware of the frame-work of the Constitution of the country.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am afraid you are not displaying it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, if he claims that it is not within the purview of his Ministry, he should not have admitted it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right ...*(Interruptions)*... Let me make another rule ...*(Interruptions)*... I am afraid if the Members persist on this, I am going to have the questions examined, now, strictly from the constitutional point of view and only those questions will be admitted which fall within the purview ...*(Interruptions)*... You can come and discuss the subject with me in the Chamber. This is a not the occasion for it. Mr. Minister, please complete your answer so that others can seek supplementaries.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Sir, the State Government has explained the irrigation potential, they are saying that there is no slippage and also saying that which districts will benefit and what it will be completed by end of December 2008. This is the information that they have provided. I cannot go to the extent of saying that the hon. Member, whom I know as a friend, was sharing information which was not correct. This is the information which I am giving to the House. I am answerable to Parliament. Whatever is the nature of the question, this is what the State Government has told me. That is the information which I have to share with the House.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: So far as irrigation facilities in Andhra Pradesh are concerned, as per the Bharat Nirman Programme, one crore hectare has to be provided all over the nation. Is it a fact that in Andhra Pradesh irrigation facilities will be provide in 15 hectares of land under this programme in future?

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Sir, that can be examined separately. But I must tell this august House that there is a letter from the Andhra Pradesh Government thanking us for responding positively to the Andhra proposal. The AIBP is helping because they have made substantial investment in irrigation.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, the Administrative Reforms Commission has made a recommendation. This is a very serious matter if the Government is going to have a control over the rivers. It will be harmful for a State like Assam. Is the Government going to accept this type of report? The Government should be very serious about it. They have to take care of the sentiments of the people if they are going to accept this type of a report.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Which report?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Losses incurred by PSU oil companies and refineries

*501. SHRI RAHUL BAJAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state: